Hometown favorite Neon Trees headlining charity concert

By Nicole Hale on June 9, 2015.

Billboard-charting group Neon Trees is coming to Utah Valley and headlining a charity concert for autistic kids, orphans and breast cancer survivors.

The Provo-based band is part of the Summer Bash, a charity event sponsored by the 5 Star Legacy Foundation. The concert will feature Neon Trees and the band Big Data and include performances by top bands Fictionist, Alex Winston, The Strike, Blue Aces, Two Nations and Yes You Are. The Summer Bash is June 13 at the Brent Brown Ballpark in Orem, and doors open at 4:30 p.m. Concert-goers can enjoy food, games and other activities to kick off the summer.

Tickets are $25, and 5 Star Legacy Foundation hopes to sell 15,000 tickets. If it reaches its goal it can give $100,000 to each of the charities represented: 5 Star Legacy Foundation, Lifting Hearts, and Kids On The Move.

John Buckner, promoter for Summer Bash, believes festivals can change the world by sponsoring charities. They can make a huge difference for a charity that operates on less than $10,000 a year.

“Imagine what good they can do if they received a million dollars,” he said. “People want to give, but sometimes they don’t know how.”

Buckner works directly with Neon Trees for Summer Bash. He said the band originally was going to take a year off but six months later decided they couldn’t stay away from their fans. Neon Trees announced it is doing a tour that will be more intimate and fan based. The Summer Bash is the band’s biggest performance for the tour, as it will take place in Neon Trees’ hometown.

Buckner said he has a vision of Summer Bash continuing to grow and eventually turn into a festival experience, similar to Coachella, the famous California music festival.

Neon Trees’ bass guitarist, Brandon Campbell, has a son with autism, and Buckner said Campbell has worked with the charity Kids On The Move before.

Kids On The Move is a nonprofit organization that helps children with disabilities in Utah Valley and is now expanding to help children all over Utah.

Ruby Haddock, vice president of development for Kids On The Move, said the Summer Bash is a great event because people get to listen to awesome music while giving back to the charities.
The money KOTM receives from these fundraisers will go into scholarships for autistic children and help the organization repair its 29-year-old building in Orem.

Haddock said KOTM spends about $6.7 million each year and receives about $6.3 million. She said there is no wiggle room or any extra money, and that is where the fundraisers come in. Scholarships are KOTM’s first priority, but federal grants don’t cover the repairs the building needs.

The host of the event, 5 Star Legacy Foundation, is a foundation that strives to alleviate the suffering of kids in poverty and break the cycle of poverty by providing the children with education.

The foundation recently built a school for an orphanage in Mambal, Indonesia, and needs more funds to finish its library and fill it with books. Five Star Legacy Foundation sponsors many causes; however, the money it will receive from the Summer Bash will go to one specific cause.

Tracy Schultz, event coordinator for 5 Star Legacy Foundation, said founder Mark Comer was once in a band himself and that music has always been big in his life. This is why the Summer Bash is the perfect fundraiser for the foundation.

“It will not only be fun for students but will also be a great time for families,” Schultz said. “Hopefully everyone can come out and have a great time.”

The third charity represented, Lifting Hearts, is a nonprofit organization that provides support for more than 300 breast cancer survivors. Lifting Hearts was founded by three breast cancer survivors looking for a place to help take charge of their lives again.

The money Lifting Hearts will receive from the Summer Bash will first go toward retreats where breast cancer survivors get education on healing therapies and form bonds with others survivors. Secondly, the money will go toward running the organization, such as funding its monthly meetings. The organizers also hope to put money toward a new retreat that focuses on survivors and their spouses.

Co-founder Bethanie Newby said the organization is honored to be a part of the Summer Bash and that it is a great way to bring the community together.

“I am proud to be a part of a community that knows how to do good while having fun,” she said.

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Nicole is a junior studying Journalism. She enjoys reading and traveling.

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